



Program Guide

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
The SAFE KIDS and Bell Sports Partnership	3
Conducting Research to Determine Program Strategies.....	4
Building a Wheel Safety Committee	5
Wheel Safety Education.....	6
Creating Safer Riding Environments	13
Advocacy and Public Policy	13
Media Outreach.....	16
Evaluation of SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll.....	21
Resources about Wheel Safety.....	22

Appendices:

1. *Headed for Injury* (SAFE KIDS May 2004 report)
2. *Summary of the National Strategies for Advancing Bicycle Safety* (NHTSA)
3. Bicycle injury fact sheet, recreational injury fact sheet and bicycle safety brochure (SAFE KIDS)
4. National SAFE KIDS Campaign Community Helmet Use Survey and Observational Survey of Community Helmet Use presentation
5. Template letters of thanks to volunteers and invitation to neighbors, parents, educators, etc.
6. Sample of online event registry and evaluation form
7. Discount order forms for Bell multi-sport helmets and bike helmets
8. SAFE ROUTES FOR KIDS curriculum guide
9. Representations of Safe Kids Ready to Roll bike rodeo kit materials
10. *ABC Quick Check*, *Buying Your Child a Bike* and *Kids and Bikes* (Better Bicycling fact sheets by the League of American Cyclists)
11. *Bikeability Checklist* (NHTSA)
12. Legislative resources
13. Logos page from Coalition Extranet
14. SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll evaluation form

Introduction

The Problem

Bicycles are a classic symbol of childhood recreation, transportation and health. More than 70 percent of children ages 5 to 14 (27.7 million) ride bicycles. In addition, child participation in other wheel-based sports, such as skateboarding and inline skating, has grown exponentially over the past decade. Participation in wheeled sports helps children develop the habit of healthy physical activity, and also contributes to a sense of independence and responsibility.

Unfortunately, bicycles are associated with more childhood injuries than any other consumer product except the automobile. In 2001, 134 children ages 14 and under died and nearly 314,600 were injured in bicycle crashes. Additionally, more than 176,000 children ages 5 to 14 are treated each year in hospital emergency rooms for injuries related to skateboards, scooters, and skates.

Head injury is the leading cause of death in bicycle crashes and is the most important determinant of bicycle-related death and permanent disability. Helmets have been shown to reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent and the risk of brain injury by as much as 88 percent. Unfortunately, new observational research conducted by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign reveals that fewer than half of children (41 percent) wear helmets while riding on wheels and of those who do, more than one third (35 percent) are wearing their helmets incorrectly (Appendix 1).

Since 1989, SAFE KIDS has partnered with Bell Sports to change these facts. The SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll program guide and bike rodeo kit will provide your coalition with the essential tools you need to improve the safety of children riding on wheels in your community.

The Solution

SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll is a comprehensive program that includes a step-by-step guide to conducting a community-based wheel safety program. The goal of SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll is to reduce the incidence and severity of wheel-related injuries by:

- Increasing helmet use
- Promoting safe wheel-riding behaviors
- Creating safer wheel-riding environments

As a member of the National Bike Safety Network, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign provides this guide to its coalitions in support of the National Strategies for Advancing Bicycle Safety, which outlines five key goals for improving cycling for all:

- Motorists will share the road
- Bicyclists will ride safely

- Bicyclists will wear helmets
- The legal system will support safe bicycling
- Roads and paths will safely accommodate bicyclists

In Appendix 2, you will find some of the suggested strategies to reach these goals. As you read this guide, consider ways your coalition can contribute to these national goals.

This program rejuvenates SAFE KIDS' previous program with sponsor Bell Sports, SAFE KIDS Cycle Smart.

The SAFE KIDS and Bell Sports Partnership

For more than 15 years, Bell Sports has committed its expertise and funding to SAFE KIDS coalitions across the country to keep kids safe from bicycle- and other wheel-related injury and death.

More than 2.5 million helmets have been distributed to kids in need nationwide through SAFE KIDS coalitions, courtesy of Bell's discount helmet program. The discount helmet program offers access to numerous Bell products, including ski helmets and multi-sport helmets, which can be used for inline skating, skateboarding and scooter riding.

Bell is also a firm believer in reinforcing wheeled sport safety skills and helmet use through hands-on activity. Bell's history of support in this area ranged from supporting the first-ever SAFE KIDS Safety Contest – where 2,000 child essay writers each received a free bike helmet – to donating \$1 million worth of helmets for children in need for National SAFE KIDS Week 2002.

On the legislative front, Bell Sports supports the annual SAFE KIDS helmet legislative and enforcement grant program. Through these grants, coalitions are able to conduct advocacy efforts to enact or enforce helmet-use legislation for bike riding or other wheeled sports. Numerous coalitions have been able to make strides in the legislative arena and encourage more kids to wear helmets through Bell's support.

Bell Sports has expanded its efforts to keep kids safe in 2004 by offering SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll kits to coalitions. These kits will help coalitions to host interactive events that teach children wheel safety and the rules of the road. In addition, Bell sponsored the first-ever nationwide observational study of child helmet use. This important new research, conducted by SAFE KIDS coalitions, promotes wheel safety and is intended to guide future educational efforts.

Bell Sports, the world's leading supplier of bicycle helmets, has been keeping riders safe for over 50 years. Thanks in part to Bell's generous support of SAFE KIDS, the bicycle injury death rate among children ages 14 and under declined by 69 percent from 1987 to 2001. As kids enjoy more and varied recreational activities, such as skateboarding and riding scooters, SAFE KIDS will continue to work with Bell Sports to keep them safe.

Conducting Research to Determine Program Strategies

Step 1: Collect injury-related data and determine trends.

Prior to starting your program, you should determine for your community the number of children treated for wheel-related injuries in emergency rooms and hospitals, the severity of the treated injuries and the number of deaths resulting from wheel-related injuries.

Determine the percentages of deaths and injuries that occurred when children were wearing the proper gear, especially helmets. Determine patterns of injuries by examining how, when and where injuries happen, age and socioeconomic groups affected, extent of injuries, length of stay in the hospital, cost of treatment and geographic distribution of injuries. See Appendix 3 for the Campaign's bicycle injury fact sheet, recreational injury fact sheet and bicycle safety brochure.

Step 2: Determine existing programs and environmental factors that contribute to safe riding.

Explore the information and safety programs that already exist in your community for child cyclists and other wheel-riders.

- Are there bike helmet giveaway programs through the local police?
- Are children educated about bicycle safety through the schools?
- Do laws exist for mandatory helmet use? (Check www.safekids.org for summaries of the helmet laws in 20 states and the District of Columbia. For more information on more than 100 local helmet ordinances, go to the Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute's Web site at www.helmets.org.)
- Are there safe environments (shared-use paths, bicycle-friendly road designs, skate parks, etc.) where children can ride?

The answers to these questions will help you to determine where you need to begin, whether wheel safety messages are new to this audience or ignored, and if the environment enables safe riding.

Step 3: Determine current perceptions and behaviors.

Once you know where the injuries occur and the factors that contribute to these injuries, it's time to measure the perceptions and behaviors of the community. What are the attitudes of your target audiences – children, parents and other community members? Do they know the right gear to wear when riding a wheeled vehicle? Do they take safety precautions when riding on a shared road or multi-use path?

Now watch those riders and their parents. Conduct observations of helmet use, traffic laws, riding skills, etc. Measuring actual behaviors in the beginning of the program will help you to evaluate your success throughout implementation.

See Appendix 4 for data collection sources and tools.

Building a Wheel Safety Committee

As you know, a coalition is made up of many types of people and organizations. Recruit members of your coalition and community to be a part of a “wheels committee.”

Sometimes, this committee works closely or paired with the pedestrian committee. Who would be interested in joining this committee?

- Bicycle shop owners
- Traffic engineers
- Cycling enthusiasts
- Environmental and conservation advocates
- Urban planners
- Police
- Smart growth advocates
- Physical fitness advocates
- Neighborhood leaders
- Educators
- Head injury specialists
- Local businesses
- Skate park owners or employees
- Insurers
- Nurses, doctors and other emergency responders
- Elected officials
- Parents, grandparents and other caregivers
- University students
- Media
- Kids

Although these people may not be able to join you for every meeting, keep them informed of your efforts. Send them agendas, e-mail them meeting minutes or publish a mini-update to e-mail to these potential supporters. When the time comes to advocate for a traffic-calming device, host a wheel safety event or conduct research, one of these people could be very helpful.

Another person to contact is your state’s bicycle/pedestrian coordinator. Invite him or her to a wheels committee meeting as a guest speaker to provide input on your objectives and strategies. The state bicycle/pedestrian coordinator can link your committee to other groups working on similar issues.

Engaging Committee Members

As a coalition coordinator, you mobilize people on a daily basis. Here are some reminders for keeping committee members motivated and on track.

1. Disseminate agendas prior to each meeting.
2. Mail or e-mail meeting minutes to all members of the committee, whether active or not.
3. Host online discussions or conference calls when calendars do not allow a face-to-face meeting.
4. Share articles, research, new resources and other tools with your members to add to their knowledge of bikes, scooters, skateboards and inline skates.
5. Develop an action plan and a timeline for the committee, and assign specific items to each member. Consider their talents and expertise when asking for help.
6. Designate someone else to lead the wheels committee, and hold him or her accountable for following all of the above tips. Parents make excellent leaders!

The best way to keep a volunteer is to thank him or her whenever a task is taken on or completed! Be sure you provide incentives and gratitude for his or her efforts. See Appendix 5 for sample letters of thanks and invitation.

Wheel Safety Education

Educating both adults and children about safety related to bicycles and other wheeled vehicles is important. Education programs work to influence the cognitive and behavioral factors that may lead to injury and death.

The most common crashes among children are:

1. Ride-out – This occurs when, without stopping, a child rides into a street from a driveway, sidewalk or curb. Often the child does not look before riding out and is not visible to the driver.
2. Left turn or swerve – This occurs when a child moves left without yielding to other traffic, often without looking behind for traffic.
3. Stop sign ride-out – This occurs when a child does not obey a stop sign. Children often run stop signs, not realizing that they have to follow the same rules as drivers.
4. Wrong-way riding – Children riding against the flow of traffic are hit in a variety of situations, commonly when a right-turning car pulls around a corner, hitting an oncoming wrong-way rider. Seeing cars coming head-on gives a false sense of security to the rider, because the rider often cannot be seen and drivers do not expect a rider to be there.

It's important to teach children the safest ways to avoid these dangers. A SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll event can be the first step to introducing new information about cycling and riding to kids and their parents. Learn how to plan and set up a SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll event below.

Step 1: Target a location.

Your research will reveal areas where children and parents need wheel safety education or safer riding environments. Work with local police to prioritize locations to target. The police will also be helpful in promoting the event to the community.

Step 2: Invite police, neighbors, parents, educators and others in the community to join you as you plan the event.

Once you target a location, determine community members who could help you to plan and promote the event. If it is a school, ask the physical education or health teacher for support. If it is a neighborhood, ask a traffic officer for the area to help you identify neighbors who are interested in keeping kids safe.

Step 3: Determine an event date, time, location and rain plans.

If you are working with a school or a children's organization, such as the Scouts, ask them for suggestions about the best time and place. For communitywide events, choose a parking lot that can be vacated and is near a playground. In case of rain, reserve a school gym, or promote an alternate date in advance. Keep the event to four hours, and offer two shifts to volunteers. A typical event runs from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Step 4: Seek in-kind sponsors to provide incentives, helmets, refreshments and entertainment.

Local businesses like their customers to believe they are involved in the community. There are many in-kind donations you can seek for this event. Some examples are:

- A fast-food chain can donate certificates for fries or ice cream to kids that complete the program
- A local grocery store can provide drinks and snacks for volunteers
- A radio station can provide music and live coverage
- An insurance company can donate funding to purchase the helmets through the Bell discount program

How do you ask for these donations? At least two months in advance, send a letter making a specific request (e.g., 30 bottles of water for volunteers). Be sure to let the potential sponsor know what they will get as a result. For example, you may want to include their logos on all promotion and mention them in the news release.

Step 5: Promote the event.

SAFE KIDS provides template tools in the media section of this guide that you can use to promote your event locally. Promotion is critical to the success of this event, because it determines the number of participants. You can promote your event on the SAFE KIDS

Web site (www.safekids.org) by registering your event online. See the information to be collected on the event registry form and the event evaluation form in Appendix 6.

Step 6: Order helmets and other materials.

Be sure you have enough helmets for the maximum number of children that could attend. See Appendix 7 for Bell helmet discount forms. In addition to the contents of the Ready to Roll kit, other supplies to consider having on hand are:

- Tables for registration, refreshments and educational materials
- Chairs
- Name tags for volunteers
- Markers and pens
- First aid kit
- Public address system
- Basic tools for bike repairs and a tire pump
- Additional traffic cones, colored masking tape, sidewalk chalk or sponges to mark courses
- 100-foot tape measure
- Cooler for soft drinks, water or ice
- Prizes for participants
- Provision for a shaded area, such as a tent
- Sunscreen, in case children do not have any
- Extra bicycles in proper working order
- Surgical hats (for children to wear if they are borrowing helmets)
- Reflective stickers

Step 7: Recruit volunteers.

Volunteers make up your coalition. Besides the wheels committee, you can recruit local police officers who patrol the targeted neighborhood, bicycle shop employees, paramedics, educators, health and fitness advocates, parents and teenagers seeking public service credits. These volunteers should be trained to fit helmets, teach safe riding skills and engage children.

Step 8: Set up the stations.

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign and Bell Sports will provide you with a bike rodeo kit containing a banner, flag ropes, cones, report cards, and signs to indicate each station, including:

- Helmet Check
- Wheel Fit
- Wheel Shop
- Ride Right

- Following Rules
- Safe Places to Wheel

In addition, the Campaign is providing with explicit permission a copy of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance's publication "Safe Routes for Kids" (Appendix 8). Representations of bike rodeo kit materials are included as Appendix 9.

Station 1: Helmet Check

Before a child participates in this event, you want to be sure he or she has a helmet that fits and meets the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's standards (indicated by presence of a CPSC label). The wheels committee should determine in advance the policies for providing free or low-cost helmets and replacing helmets that have been outgrown or damaged. No child should participate in this program without a helmet.

Once the child has a CPSC-approved helmet that is the proper size, teach the easy three-step Eyes-Ears-Mouth process to make sure the helmet fits and is worn correctly every time.

Eyes: Look up, and you should see the rim of the helmet. The rim should be one to two fingers above your eyebrows and level on your head.

Ears: Adjust the straps of the helmet so that they form a "V" right under each ear lobe. Make a "V" to measure with your index and middle fingers.

Mouth: Once the straps are adjusted in a "V," buckle them. They should be snug, but not too tight. Adjust until you can put one finger between the strap and your chin. Now, open your mouth as wide as you can. You should feel the helmet hug your head and the strap snug to your chin. If you do, you're ready to fit the bike!

Station 2: Wheel Fit

The next step is to check if the bike, scooter, skateboard or inline skates the child is using are properly fitted. Invite bicycle shop employees to help you!

For a bike, a child should be able to sit on the seat and touch both feet to the ground. As the child develops more confidence, the seat can be raised so that he or she can just touch the toes of both feet or only one foot to the ground.

Station 3: Wheel Shop

Here, children learn to adjust their bicycles or scooters and to make simple repairs.

Teach children how to:

- Fill tires with air
- Tighten all spokes and replace broken spokes
- Adjust the handlebars and the seat
- Replace flat tires
- Replace worn brake pads
- Tighten all screws, nuts and bolts on the bike frame
- Check the chain to be sure it is secure
- Secure and clean the reflectors, mirrors and lights

See Appendix 10 for quick checks on fitting a bike and making sure it is in the best condition.

Station 4: Following Rules

So far, children may have only been passengers or pedestrians. At this stop, it is important to explain to kids how traffic works. Talk to them about what different signs mean, showing examples of each sign (stop, yield, etc.). Teach them about yielding, passing, predicting traffic flow and the traffic laws that relate to cyclists. Bicycle riders have to obey the same rules as cars and buses. Be sure to mention the importance of riding with traffic.

Teach children the hand signals they should use to alert drivers to their actions:

- Left turn – extend your left arm out straight from your side
- Right turn – extend your left arm out from your side, bent at a 90-degree angle at the elbow, hand pointing upward and the palm of your hand facing forward. Another option is to put your right arm out straight from your side.
- Stopping or slowing – extend your left arm out from your side, bent at a 90-degree angle at the elbow, hand pointing downward and the palm of your hand facing backward

Once you tell children about all of these rules, quiz them orally. To further teach these lessons, set up a mini-road using masking tape, traffic cones or sidewalk chalk. Ask children to volunteer to serve as “signage” or obstacles, such as parked cars. Have each cyclist ride through the course as a volunteer calls out directions to him or her, such as “turn left,” “slow down,” “turn right.” The child cyclist should also remember to comply with the directions of all “signage.”

Station 5: Ride Right

At this stop, children learn how to balance, start and stop, ride straight, ride slowly and scan and signal. Set up a mini-road and have each child practice these skills on the road.

1. Balance
 - Have children practice riding in circles as well as a straight line
 - Show them how to use the brakes; get them to skid the rear wheels
 - Have them ride as slowly as possible without touching the ground
2. Starting and stopping
 - Children should learn to stop before entering a roadway
 - Teach them to look left, then right, then left again before proceeding
 - Remind them that driveways, sidewalks and crosswalks are potential danger zones
 - Practice starting and stopping over and over until it seems easy
3. Riding straight
 - Have children ride on a painted line in a parking lot
 - Teach them that straight-line riding will allow drivers to predict what they will do
 - Remind them that predictability is important in any traffic situation; kids don't know this
4. Scanning and signaling
 - Have children ride straight and look back at you without swerving
 - Teach them that they must scan for traffic in front of and behind them before signaling
 - Have them incorporate the signals they learned at Station 3

Bike control skills may also include the following activities:

- Zig-zag – use sponges or traffic cones to set up a pattern that children must weave through
- Slow race – mark start and finish lines. You may need a stopwatch. Children are challenged to ride as slowly as possible from the start to the finish line without touching a foot to the ground. The slowest rider wins.
- Figure 8 – use sidewalk chalk or tape to outline a figure 8 that children must follow with their bikes. Make it large enough to allow children to safely make turns.
- Driveway ride-out – use cones to create a “driveway” with a fence or bush as a sight obstruction at the end. Create cardboard cars and ask for children to volunteer to “drive.” Instruct children on bicycles to enter the roadway from the driveway. Be sure they stop and look both ways, check again before going and take off smoothly, with good pedal position (front pedal higher than rear pedal).
- Scanning – teach children to look behind for traffic and be aware of their surroundings. Draw a straight line between two cones. Children on bicycles will ride straight along the line. Volunteers holding cardboard cars act as traffic. Cyclists should be able to look behind without veering left or right.

Station 6: Safe Places to Wheel

“I didn’t see him.” That is one of the most frequent excuses a driver gives after crashing into a cyclist, and often the driver is telling the truth. That’s why children should know what they can do to see and be seen.

First, be sure parents and children know how to incorporate the right gear for visibility.

- Incorporate retroreflective material on their clothing, accessories and shoes when riding
- Equip the wheeled vehicle with reflectors on the front, the rear, the wheels and the pedals
- Add a front light to a scooter or bike
- Do not ride when it’s dark

Now, teach children about different types of things they need to watch for as drivers of wheeled vehicles. Be sure they understand the following types of hazards:

- Moving hazards – cars, pedestrians, dogs, other cyclists, trains, trucks, buses, motorcycles or anything else that could cross their paths
- Stationary hazards – parked cars, utility poles, park benches, fire hydrants, fences, parked bicycles or anything else that would be in the way
- Surface hazards – potholes, sand, rocks, drain grates, concrete joints, raised manhole covers, broken glass, cans, other roadway litter and anything else that could cause a fall or loss of control
- Visual hazards – bushes and shrubs, fences, parked cars, buildings, large or flashing signs and other things that either block the view or distract attention

Now set up a course that is often referred to as the “Rock Dodge.” Use chalk or masking tape to create a narrow lane for bicyclists to remain in. Then, use soft sponges to serve as “obstacles” for children to avoid. Tell the riders to travel straight toward the “obstacles” and steer around them at the last minute. They must remain in the narrow space (3 to 6 feet for kids 10 or older and 6 to 12 feet for kids under 10). The children must steer by turning their handlebars one way (to avoid the object), turning back the other way (to keep from falling) and then turning straight ahead (to continue).

Step 9: Break down and clean up.

When using space at a school or in a neighborhood, be sure you clean the area so that it is in better condition than when you arrived. If necessary, schedule a shift of volunteers for this task, as many of the event volunteers will be tired.

Step 10: Say thank you!

Following the event, be sure to thank anyone who contributed ideas, time or products!

Creating Safer Riding Environments

SAFE KIDS coalitions can play a major role in creating bicycle-friendly communities that are safe for child cyclists. Proper facility design is the ultimate responsibility of the traffic engineer. The traffic engineer can do this most effectively by working with concerned citizens, such as SAFE KIDS coalitions.

In Appendix 11, you can see a bikeability checklist for examining environments for cyclists. The following should be considered when assessing whether an area is safe for child cyclists:

- Do children have safe access to commonly traveled locations near their homes, schools, recreation facilities, shopping and other residential areas?
- Is there a well-defined separation between bicycles and motor vehicles, such as a wide shoulder lane for cyclists?
- Do areas frequented by children, such as schools, neighborhoods and community centers, have low motor vehicle speed limits and other traffic-calming devices?

When done properly, traffic calming balances the needs of all users of a street: drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and others. It often restores safety in neighborhoods that have been overwhelmed by speeding, cut-through traffic or both. Many traffic-calming enhancements bring the added benefits of:

- Decreased pedestrian and bicyclist injuries
- More space for children to play
- Less noise and pollution
- Improved scenery
- Neighborhood revitalization
- More eyes on the street, reducing crime

Most traffic-calming solutions decrease the volume and speed of cars by installing humps or tables or by forcing cars to maneuver around circles or curves, thus blocking a long view of the road ahead.

Funding for pedestrian- and bicycling-related infrastructure improvements was not available before the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. During the past decade, making traffic safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists has become a higher priority for many government metropolitan planning agencies. SAFE KIDS is working with America Bikes (www.americabikes.org) and America Walks (www.americawalks.org) to promote funding for a national Safe Routes to School program.

Advocacy and Public Policy

Enacting a new law or improving your state or locality's existing mandate can be a key method for reducing the incidence and severity of unintentional injury. Whether you are

pushing for a child bike helmet law or safer riding environments, advocacy begins with building mutually beneficial relationships. The steps to effective public policy advocacy are outlined below. For help with writing letters of thanks and invitation, see Appendix 12.

Step 1: Make friends in high places.

Contact key policymakers *before* you have a specific public policy request. Introduce them to the issue of childhood injury prevention and to your coalition's programs. This should be an ongoing process throughout the year. A policymaker who knows you and recognizes the importance of childhood injury prevention is more likely to be responsive when you need his or her assistance with a specific public policy issue.

Create a target list of key policymakers to focus your advocacy efforts. Examples of influential policymakers include:

- Governor
- Lieutenant governor
- Mayor or county executive
- Member of U.S. Congress
- County board or city council member
- Chairs or members of health, human services, transportation, consumer affairs or appropriations committees in the state legislature
- Administrators of health, human services, transportation or consumer affairs departments at the state and local levels
- State legislators who have some history of advocating for children or bike-related programs or who are known to have young children

Other influential people include the staff of any policymakers, the spouses of high-ranking state or local elected officials (governor, mayor, county executive, etc.) and the bicycle/pedestrian coordinators for the city, county or state.

Strategies for engaging policymakers and fostering friendly relationships:

- Contact the policymakers and government officials on your target list. Send a letter of introduction and ask for an introductory meeting. Enclose coalition brochures containing bike, wheeled sport and general information. (See more under Step 4: Contact Public Policymakers.) Also, invite the policymaker to attend a community safety event or to visit a hospital emergency room. Take the policymaker on a tour of a hospital or local health clinic that has a history of innovative community education programs.
- Add the policymaker and staff members to your coalition mailing list
- Ask the policymaker to serve as your coalition's honorary chair or to serve on your board
- Invite the policymaker to speak at a special event, luncheon or meeting

Step 2: Set priorities.

Ask for only one public policy intervention (for example, support for a bicycle helmet bill) at a time.

Use the following criteria to determine if your issue is a high priority for your coalition and your public policymakers:

- Have you done a needs assessment of the risk in your region? (For example, is there a high incidence of injuries related to this risk area?)
- Do you have good data/research supporting your request?
- Has there been media coverage of an event related to your issue? (For example, a bicycle crash in which a child was killed.)
- Are there allies in the community, as well as among public policymakers, for the issue?
- Is it a good legislative/political climate for that issue? (For example, is your state legislature or city council conservative, moderate or liberal regarding social policies? What is your governor's or mayor's position regarding the role of government in keeping children safe from injury?)
- Do you have the resources (volunteers, time and materials) to spend advocating for the issue?

Step 3: Organize yourself.

Develop an action plan with timelines and specific tasks, including:

- A strategy for developing a coalition of allied organizations
- A list of key public policymakers (allies and opponents), including both elected and appointed state/local government officials. (See Step 1 for more information.)
- A detailed strategy that incorporates the public schedule of relevant policymaking activities (for example, the state budget process or legislative calendar). The strategy should include a timeline for contacting key policymakers. Initially, focus on your established "friends," targeted in Step 1, particularly those on relevant committees of your legislature, city council or county board.
- A media strategy (see media section of this guide)
- A list of children and their families who can serve as advocates for the media, committee hearings or both

Step 4: Contact public policymakers.

Personal interaction with policymakers and their staff is critical to the success of your legislative effort.

- Call and make an appointment as far in advance as possible. Re-confirm your meeting by telephone a few days before your scheduled appointment.

- Respect their limited time – be brief in your request
- Don't be disappointed if you end up with a meeting with a staff member – they are key to a policymaker's decision-making process
- Know your subject and tailor your conversation to your audience – refer to their background, past legislative efforts on behalf of children, etc. Provide anecdotes about children who have been injured (especially if they are constituents.)
- Come prepared with succinct written information about your coalition, a written proposal of what you want, good local data and strong supporting arguments. Never leave without providing them with your request and supporting materials on paper!
- Be specific in your request (for example, introduce a bill or vote for a bill). Always offer to “do the work for them” – for example, by providing draft legislation or local data.

Step 5: Follow up.

After the meeting, remember to:

- Send thank-you letters to the policymaker and appropriate staff members. In your letter, reiterate the key points that were discussed during your meeting and provide additional information in response to issues raised in the meeting. (For a sample thank-you letter, see Appendix 12.)
- Encourage allies to write and visit the policymaker
- Invite the policymaker and staff members to an upcoming coalition event
- Keep the policymaker and staff informed as to the progress of your advocacy effort

Step 6: Evaluate the outcome.

Learn from your actions by answering the following questions:

- If the effort was successful, what were the keys to success?
- If the effort was not successful, what went wrong?
- Was it the wrong issue for the time?
- Did you start the advocacy process too late?
- Did you have enough data and a compelling story?
- Did you have a strong ally in public office or strong enough community allies?
Both? Neither?

Media Outreach

Media outreach can be the fuel for your educational efforts. The news media provide a public forum to alert decision makers and their constituents about safety-related issues in the community. In addition, the media can help celebrate and inform the community of programs, safety improvements and the good work of SAFE KIDS.

Proactive Media Outreach

News is information that is timely and personally significant. News is more applicable when it impacts a large number of people. The media features information that is considered newsworthy—meaning it is timely, interesting and important.

When presenting newsworthy information to the media, be sure to develop key messages that summarize the problem and the solution. Use these statements when you or coalition members are communicating to the media.

Key Messages for SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll

- It is estimated that more than 70 percent of kids ages 5-14 ride bicycles
- Child participation in other sports such as skateboarding and inline skating has grown tremendously over the past decade
- As a result, many children get injured. Children account for approximately one-quarter of all bicycle-related deaths and more than half of all bicycle-related injuries
- Head injury is the leading cause of wheeled sports-related death and is the most important determinant of permanent disability after a crash
- The single most effective way to reduce head injury from these types of crashes is to wear a helmet
- Unfortunately, helmet use among child bicyclists is only 46 percent and is lowest among children ages 10 to 14, boys, residents of states with no bicycle helmet laws and riders on residential streets
- That's why SAFE KIDS has teamed with longtime partner Bell Sports on a new wheel safety program, SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll
- As part of the program, SAFE KIDS will increase bicycle helmet use, promote safe bicycling behaviors and create safer bicycling environments
- SAFE KIDS will also be hosting bike rodeos, interactive events that teach children wheel safety and the rules of the road
- Thanks in part to Bell's generous support of SAFE KIDS, the bicycle injury death rate among children ages 14 and under declined by 60 percent from 1987 to 2000

Media Tools

Tools that you can use when seeking media attention for your bike and other wheel-related education efforts and successes include news releases, media advisories, letters to the editor, op-eds and pitch letters. Each can be targeted to specific broadcast or print media.

- Media advisory – alerts the media about the “who, what, when, where and why” of an event. Use this tool when you are hosting a bike rodeo event open to the public or a news conference or other event addressing bike and wheel-related issues, including advocacy efforts to improve or institute helmet laws.

- News release – provides the media with comprehensive details to write or broadcast a story. Some examples of when to write a news release: after conducting research on helmet use or wheels-related injuries, when you're hosting a bike rodeo or when a new law has been passed.
- Feature pitch letter – invites media to do exclusive coverage of your issue. For example, invite a media person to come to your bike rodeo to witness firsthand kids participating in wheel-related activities.
- Op-ed – educates the public about an issue in the community, such as the need for a new helmet law. This tool can be “authored” by a coalition coordinator, an elected official or a transportation engineer and should be arranged with the editorial board of a local newspaper.
- Letter to the editor – responds to an article from a past edition of a publication. Use this tool as an educational moment to respond to a child's death or injury and promote helmet safety.
- Public service announcements – Public service advertising is commonly defined as "advertising that serves the public interest." The majority of public service advertisements (PSAs) run as a community service at no charge by the media. The objectives of these ads are education and awareness of significant social issues, in an effort to change the public's attitudes and behaviors and stimulate positive social change. Use print, radio or television PSAs to promote attendance at your bike rodeos, get children to wear helmets or educate parents and children about legislation.

Samples of these tools will be available on the Coalition Extranet.

The Media List

It is essential to send media materials to the right person. Compile and keep updated a media list of local television, radio and print outlets. Be sure to target the media list to include media that you are familiar with and that cover similar stories. Contact each media outlet and obtain contact person name, direct phone number, fax number and e-mail address. Make sure to keep a record of your growing list. It will be important for follow-up calls. Reporters to target include:

- Traffic reporter
- Transportation reporter
- Investigative reporter
- Metro reporters (local neighborhoods)
- Education reporters
- Calendar editors (media advisory only)
- Planning/futures editor (media advisory only)
- Assignment editor (media advisory only)
- Health editor
- Consumer reporter
- Parenting/family editor

- Editorial editor (op-eds and letters to the editor only)

Select a Spokesperson

When speaking to the media, it is very helpful to use a designated spokesperson. This gives the media effort a single source of information. A spokesperson should have the authority to speak on behalf of the coalition and should have good public speaking skills. This individual should also be trained to reinforce key messages.

Contact Reporters and Editors

Once you have updated the media list and selected a spokesperson, use this guide to begin contacting reporters and editors to introduce the story and schedule interviews.

News Medium	Starting Point	Reporters/Editors
Newspapers	List newspapers in your area, include weekly publications Record contact information Track reporter beats and the stories they cover by monitoring the selected media Determine deadlines	Traffic Transportation Investigative Education Health Parenting Family Metro Calendar editor for events Assignment editors for news events Photo editor
Newsletters	Develop a list of relevant corporations, safety organizations, schools, transportation organizations, PTA groups and other special interest groups that may have newsletters Record contact information Find out the lead time	Editor Publications department

Television	Develop list of local ABC, CBS and NBC affiliates Add other local affiliates with news segments to list (Fox, CNN, UPN, WB, Univision or Telemundo) Add local all-news cable station, if it exists Add school district station, if it exists Record contact information Find out the lead time	Assignment editor Daybook editor Segment producer News producer Planning editor
Radio	Develop list of local news, talk and public stations in your area Record contact information Find out the lead time	News director Program director Daybook editor
Wire	Develop list of wire agencies that may be interested Record contact information Find out the lead time	Daybook editors at regional Associated Press and Reuters agencies

Leaving Voice Mail

Generally, the best time to contact a media representative is during the hours between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Typically, after 2 p.m. reporters are on deadline, completing stories for daily newspapers or evening news broadcast segments. For radio, call even earlier! Many reporters finish their shifts around 10 a.m.

If you call a reporter during these core hours and reach voice mail, leave a brief, direct message.

- State your name, the coalition's name and your phone number at the beginning of the message
- Recite your 15- to 20-second opening statement, prepared from your already developed messages, and then repeat your name and phone number
- When you are preparing materials to send to a reporter, be sure to include a phone number with voice mail so that, if you are not available or are on another line, the reporter can leave a message
- Be sure to return reporters' calls in a timely fashion, so that you do not lose your opportunity of interest

Talking to a Reporter

Should you reach a live person, remember these tips:

- Keep the conversation focused and brief
- Reinforce the key points of your news
- Provide any new information that is relevant to the story
- Point out the story's impact on the community
- Invite the reporter to do an interview
- Provide background information, photographs or both that are related to your topic

Logo Use

In order for the SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll program to achieve “brand” identification, it’s important to standardize our image on all printed materials. This helps SAFE KIDS and Bell to reflect a consistent image before important audiences.

Included in Appendix 13 is a copy of the logo page on the Coalition Extranet, with electronic files as they should be used to encapsulate the “brand” image for the SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll program. Offer these images and any photos of your local events to print reporters.

Follow Up

Once a story appears in the news, you may want to follow up with the reporter to thank him or her for covering the story. You can phone or send a letter or an e-mail. This type of interaction helps to foster a growing relationship between the coalition and the reporter.

Capturing Media Impressions

Measuring the reach of your message is vital. Monitor local media by recording broadcasts and clipping articles. Be sure to send copies of the media hits for SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll to the National SAFE KIDS Campaign as soon as possible.

Your lead organization may already contract with video and newspaper monitoring companies, such as Video Monitoring Service, Burrelle’s, Lexis-Nexis or Bacon’s. These companies can tabulate the number of media stories for SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll. Please forward any information received from these services to the Campaign.

Evaluation of SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll

It is essential that you plan your evaluation strategies and procedures before launching your program so that you will collect the appropriate baseline data before you start. This helps to prove your success and the need for this type of program. Your bicycle safety program should receive formative, process, impact and outcome evaluation.

- **Formative evaluation** tests program plans, messages and materials *before* they are put into place. Personal interviews or focus groups may help you to determine perceptions of vulnerability to injury and knowledge of safe behaviors and laws. They also serve as baseline measurements of safe behaviors and obeying of laws.
- **Process evaluation** determines if and how your bicycle safety program has been implemented and if the objectives have been achieved. For example, it examines who was reached by the educational presentations, the number of helmets distributed and fitted through discount helmet programs, the number of new partners, the number of attendees and the number of news stories placed. The results from process evaluation will be quantifiable.
- **Impact evaluation** indicates whether the program has had its intended effect on knowledge, behavior and the environment. It addresses such issues as the increase in the observed number of bicycle helmets being worn correctly, the enactment of mandatory helmet legislation, the changes in attitudes towards sharing the road and results from any traffic-calming improvements made for child cyclists.
- **Outcome evaluation** is a longer-term process that determines whether there has been a reduction in the incidence of targeted injury. It examines progress achieved toward your program's ultimate objective – a reduction in deaths and injuries among child cyclists and riders of other wheeled vehicles.

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign would like to help promote and keep track of your local activities to help secure future funding for this program. See Appendix 14 to view a copy of the overall program evaluation form to be submitted to the National SAFE KIDS Campaign by May 31, 2005. The information you provide will help the National SAFE KIDS Campaign report to Bell Sports and other sponsors about your success.

Resources about Wheel Safety

National Organizations

\$\$ - If this symbol appears next to the title of the organization, the organization offers grants to support local bicycle and pedestrian safety initiatives.

Active Living By Design - \$\$

www.activelivingbydesign.org

Active Living by Design is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that establishes and evaluates innovative approaches to increase physical activity through community design, public policies and communications strategies.

Active Living Network

www.activeliving.org

Active Living Network is an organization dedicated to building a national coalition of leaders focused on linking the built environment with physical activity. There is a great communications toolkit available at this Web site about safer environments to increase physical activity.

America Bikes

www.americabikes.org

America Bikes is a coalition of eight major national bicycling organizations focused on the reauthorization of TEA-21 in 2003. The group is working to support a Safe Routes to School program, continue the funding that is building bike facilities in communities across the country, help develop a seamless bicycle transportation network and ensure that new road projects are safe for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals

www.apbp.org

The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals links you to other pedestrian and bike advocates through its Web site.

Bicycle Friendly Communities - \$\$

www.bicyclefriendlycommunities.org

The Bicycle Friendly Community Campaign is an awards program that recognizes municipalities that actively support bicycling. A Bicycle-Friendly Community provides safe accommodation for cycling and encourages its residents to bike for transportation and recreation. The League of American Bicyclists administers the Bicycle Friendly Community Campaign.

Bicycle Helmet Safety Institute

www.helmets.org

This site hosts the most comprehensive information about bicycle helmets. Find research, news articles, laws, personal stories and more to support your local efforts.

Bikes Belong - \$\$

www.BikesBelong.org

Bikes Belong seeks to assist local organizations, agencies and citizens in developing bicycle facilities projects funded by TEA-21. Visit the Web site to receive a copy of the Guide to Bicycle Advocacy.

Center for Livable Communities

www.lgc.org/center

The Center for Livable Communities helps governments and community leaders to be proactive in land use and transportation planning by adopting programs and policies that lead to more livable and resource-efficient land use patterns.

Institute of Transportation Engineers

www.ite.org

The Institute of Transportation Engineers Web site is a great resource for traffic-calming articles, research documents and other engineering-related information about traffic safety.

International Walk to School Day

www.iwalktoschool.org

This Web site is dedicated to schools planning for International Walk to School Day.

Keep Kids Alive – Drive 25™

www.keepkidsalive.com

Keep Kids Alive – Drive 25™ is a safety campaign designed to encourage motorists to observe the residential speed limit. This organization features other initiatives including NO NEED TO SPEED™, which aims to expand the campaign to all speed zones; STOP MEANS STOP™, which includes stoplight and stop sign observance; and STOP! TAKE 3 TO SEE.

League of American Bicyclists

www.bikeleague.org

The League of American Bicyclists promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America.

Local Government Commission

www.lgc.org/community_design/index.html

The Local Government Commission is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that provides inspiration, technical assistance and networking to local elected officials and other dedicated community leaders who are working to create healthy, walkable and resource-efficient communities. The LGC has published several downloadable documents on improving pedestrian environments.

National Center for Bicycling and Walking - \$\$

www.bikewalk.org

The National Center for Bicycling and Walking focuses on issues of public health, including physical fitness, transportation safety, land use and injury prevention. The NCBW recently launched a new Walkable Communities Workshop to engage local communities in re-thinking their transportation plans to increase nonmotorized transportation options. Click to this Web site and subscribe to the biweekly e-newsletter *Centerlines*.

National Charrette Institute

www.charretteinstitute.org

The National Charrette Institute is a nonprofit educational institution that helps communities achieve healthy transformation through collaborative planning processes that harness the talents and energies of all interested parties to create and support a buildable plan.

National SAFE KIDS Campaign - \$\$

www.safekids.org

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign offers several bicycle and pedestrian safety grants to local SAFE KIDS coalitions. The grant funding supports: implementation of the SAFE KIDS Ready to Roll program; implementation of the *SAFE KIDS Walk This Way*

program; *SAFE KIDS Walk This Way* Pedestrian Safety Task Forces; research activities for a specific behavior, environment or violation; advocacy for bicycle or other helmet legislation; and enforcement activities related to bicycle helmet laws.

The National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse

www.enhancements.org

The National Transportation Enhancements Clearinghouse provides timely and accurate information necessary to make well-informed decisions about transportation enhancements, as indicated in TEA-21.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center

www.walkinginfo.org

www.bicyclinginfo.org

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center provides all available information for pedestrian advocacy. PBIC also has a great e-newsletter and a digital library of photographs for presentations.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy - \$\$

www.railstrails.org

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is a group focused on enriching America's communities and countryside by creating a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors. Visit the Web site to obtain fact sheets and opportunities for funding.

Smart Growth

www.smartgrowth.org

Smart Growth encourages walkable communities and improved pedestrian safety as a means of building stronger communities.

Surface Transportation Policy Project

www.transact.org

www.tea3.org

www.tea21.org

The Surface Transportation Policy Project is a national coalition of grassroots and national organizations that advocate for balanced transportation policy. Their Web site provides a broad range of transportation information, including updates on TEA-3, the TEA-21 reauthorization debate, Safe Routes to School initiatives, smart growth initiatives, research and new publications.

Transportation Alternatives

www.saferoutestoschool.org

www.transalt.org

This site encourages bicycling, walking and public transit as alternatives to automobile use.

The University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center

www.hsrrc.unc.edu

HSRC is a great resource on child pedestrian safety. Visit the Web site for more information on child pedestrian safety.

Urban Land Institute

www.uli.org

ULI encourages the exchange of ideas and experience among its 14,000 members in 52 countries, initiates research on emerging land use trends and provides advisory services, educational programs and publications on policy and practice.

Walkable Communities, Inc.

www.walkable.org

Walkable Communities, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation founded by Dan Burden that assists communities in becoming more walkable and pedestrian-friendly. They offer resources such as presentations, publications, slide sets, walkable audits (to help determine specific problems and solutions), training courses, workshops, planning and visioning charrettes to facilitate community planning efforts, and mediation in community disputes over planning issues.

Federal Agencies

Centers for Disease Control – Active Community Environments - \$\$

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/aces.htm

ACEs is a CDC-sponsored initiative to promote walking, bicycling and the development of accessible recreation facilities.

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion – KidsWalk-to-School program

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/kidswalk

CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity Program has developed KidsWalk-to-School. This is a community-based program that aims to increase opportunities for daily physical activity by encouraging children to walk to and from school in groups accompanied by adults.

Environmental Protection Agency - \$\$

www.epa.gov

For more than thirty years, the mission of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been to protect human health and safeguard our environment. The EPA has recently become involved with Walk to School Day and other efforts to increase walking and bicycling among children as a means of decreasing traffic congestion and improving air quality.

Federal Highway Administration - \$\$

www.fhwa.dot.gov

FHWA provides proactive leadership, expertise, resources and information to continually improve the quality of our nation's highway system and its intermodal connections.

FHWA undertakes this mission in cooperation with partners to enhance the country's economic vitality, quality of life, and the environment. Visit the Web site to find articles, research documents and in-depth information about pedestrian safety programs throughout the nation.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration - \$\$

www.nhtsa.dot.gov

NHTSA aims to reduce deaths, injuries and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle-related crashes. This agency also conducts research on driver behavior and traffic safety in order to develop the most efficient and effective means of bringing about safety improvements. Materials are available on pedestrian, bicycle and school-bus safety improvements. Spanish-language materials on pedestrian safety have been developed.

International Web Sites

Go for Green

www.goforgreen.ca

Go for Green is the Active Living & Environment Program in Canada, whose mission is to encourage outdoor physical activity that protects, enhances or restores the environment. Go for Green uses community-driven solutions to make a positive contribution for Canada. This Web site, which is available in English and French, describes active and safe routes to school and compiles success stories, resources, publications and case studies of the program.

Greenest City Project

www.greenestcity.org

Greenest City works with Toronto's diverse communities to take action to improve air quality, better the health of residents, regenerate urban life and reduce greenhouse gases.

Sustrans – Routes for People

www.sustrans.org.uk

In the United Kingdom, Sustrans' goal is to encourage people to walk and cycle more in order to reduce motor traffic and its adverse effects. One project that is promoted is Safe Routes to Schools, which is designed to enable and encourage children to cycle and walk to school by improving street design, calming traffic, creating traffic-free spaces and linking with the National Cycle Network.

Model State/Local Programs

The Bronx Safe Routes to School Program
www.transalt.org/campaigns/school

California Safe Routes to School Clearinghouse
www.4saferoutes.org

California Safe Routes to School Initiative
www.dhs.ca.gov/routes2school

Chicagoland Bicycle Federation
www.chibikefed.org

Florida Traffic and Bike Safety Education Program
www.dcp.ufl.edu/centers/trafficsafetyed

Marin County Safe Routes to Schools
www.saferoutestoschool.org/marin.htm

Bicycle Coalition of Maine
www.bikemaine.org

Texas Bicycle Coalition
www.biketexas.org

Program Sponsor

Bell Sports
www.bellsports.com